

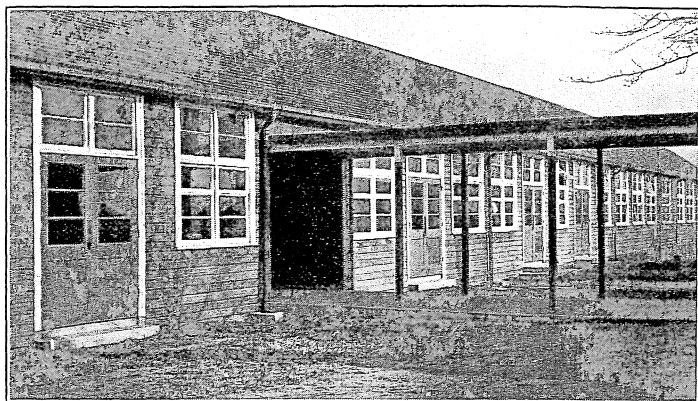
The
Alcester Grammar



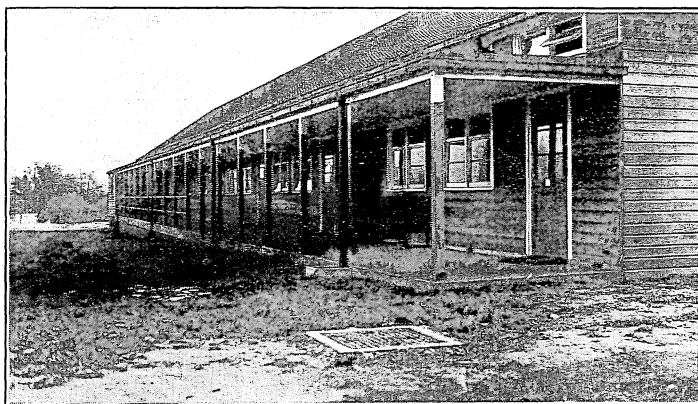
M.D.C.
NOBISCUM
CHRISTUS STATE.

School Record

March, 1940.



South Side.



North Side.

THE NEW BUILDINGS.

Alcester Grammar School Record.

No. 65.

MARCH, 1940.

EDITOR—MR. V. V. DRULLER.

COMMITTEE—

P. HORSEMAN, M. AUSTIN, STEWART.

Editorial.

While many terms pass quietly and without any outstanding event, there are some which impress themselves upon our memory for a long time. In this latter category must be included the Spring term of 1940. It will be remembered, not so much for any particular happening, as for the unusually cold weather which we experienced during the first half. Already by the time school started we had had a foretaste of wintry weather, but we were far from expecting how much was still in store for us. Day after day we had severe frosts, with several appreciable snowfalls. The climax came during the last week-end of January with a very heavy fall of snow, which at once froze. Road travel for the time was rendered either impossible or dangerous; it was but a very small school that assembled on the Monday morning, and a number of those who arrived had tramped long distances, owing to lack of transport. Only the morning session was held, and after that the school remained closed till the following Monday, by which time conditions had somewhat improved, and the many who travel by 'bus or bicycle were able to be present again. But even then the cold spell had not passed, and we had frosts and snow up to the middle of February, when at long last milder weather arrived.

It is not surprising that attendance this term has not been good in certain parts of the school. There has been no actual epidemic, but many pupils have been away with colds, while some have at times been unable to reach school owing to snow or floods.

During all this wintry weather we have greatly appreciated the work done by the new boiler, which has kept the school pleasantly warm, however bleak and cold it was outside. The new block of classrooms has been tested by weather as cold as any they are likely to be called upon to keep out, and all will agree that they have acquitted themselves well.

As frontispiece we are including this term two views of the new buildings, one taken from each side. Old scholars who have not had the opportunity of actually seeing this new addition will be able to form some impression of the way in which the school has been recently improved.

In sending best wishes to all former scholars now serving with the Forces, we would call attention to the list appearing on another page, and repeat our request for notification when any Old Scholar is called to the colours. Unless such information is supplied to us first-hand, we cannot be sure of receiving it at all.

School Register.

VALETE.

*Biddle, S. G. (VI.), 1935-39.	Hawkes, J. (Upp. IV.), 1936-39.
Machin, J. (VI.), 1929-39.	Driscoll, M. E. (Low IV.), 1938-39.
Harrison, C. (Upp. V.), 1932-39.	Day, B. (Shell), 1937-39.
Nall, M. M. (Upp. V.), 1934-39.	deGrey, C. J. (Shell), 1939.
Woods, K. A. (Upp. V.), 1935-39.	Orrell, J. R. (Shell), 1939.
Barton, A. G. (Low. V.), 1936-39.	Harrison, S. J. (III), 1935-39.
Holder, J. (Low. V.), 1935-39.	Hartwell, K. H. (III.), 1939.
Singleton, D. V. (Low. V.), 1938-39.	Wolstenholme, O. B. (III.), 1939.
Yates, R. (Low. V.), 1931-39.	Cave, H. W. M. (I.), 1939.
Green, N. E. (Upp. IV.), 1931-39.	

* Prefect.

SALVETE.

Eadie, I. J. (Shell).	Humphreys, J. C. B. (I.).
Horseman, J. M. (III.).	Humphreys, J. D. (III.).
Horseman, J. M. (III.).	

There have been 218 pupils in attendance this term.

Old Scholars' Guild News.

PRESIDENT—Mr. C. T. L. Caton.

HON. TREASURER : (Temporary) W. G. Hunt.

HON. SECRETARY : R. B. Biddle.

The Guild held its Winter Reunion at the School on Saturday, December 16th, 1939. Despite the "Black-out" restrictions and petrol rationing a very good number of Old Scholars turned up, and a most enjoyable evening was spent. Darts and table-tennis competitions were staged, and the committee gave a short entertainment, which included a sketch written and produced entirely by themselves. Musical items were rendered by Messrs. P. W. Warner, D. Richards, E. Plevin and R. B. Biddle, whilst a selection of popular songs was sung by a chorus of

committee members and a few other Old Scholars, the audience joining in lustily. Supper was partaken of in the Dining Room at 9 p.m. when the effect of the general rationing was for a time forgotten by the hundred Old Scholars who were present. During this period a short business meeting was held, and the Treasurer's report read and the Balance Sheet presented. With reference to this latter it must be recorded that our financial position is not quite as rosy as our Treasurer painted it, as the Balance Sheet did not include on its Liabilities side several accounts outstanding from the previous Summer Reunion, which have since been received.

Dancing, to the music of the Alauna Band then continued until midnight, when the Reunion came to a close with the singing of "Auld Lang Syne" and "The King"; and the passing of a vote of thanks to Mr. Caton.

The Annual Dance was held in the Town Hall, Alcester, on January 1st, when nearly a hundred-and-fifty Old Scholars and friends enjoyed a very pleasant evening. This, again, was very much in the nature of an experiment, owing to the "black-out" and petrol and food rationing, and the result was very gratifying. Perhaps the fact that it was the first late dance within a radius of over ten miles since the outbreak of War in September had much to do with its popularity.

Since the Summer Reunion the numbers of the committee have dwindled very considerably. Daisy Ison and P. E. Wheeler have answered the "bugle call," and it seems likely that at least two others will be "called-up" before the Summer Reunion. A new treasurer, W. G. Hunt, has been temporarily elected by the Committee, but no other additions have been made to its numbers. The Secretary would, therefore, like to take this early opportunity of urging Old Scholars to be on the "look-out" for at least four new committee members, and a new Secretary. Nominations for any of the above vacancies should be sent to the Secretary during the Summer term.

And, further, in order to keep our records accurately, Old Scholars who are about to join the forces are requested to let either a committee member or the Secretary know, so that their names may be included in the "Record." Notice of promotions is also very welcome.

Mrs. S. F. Smallwood (née Kathleen Perks), a past secretary and president of the Guild, whose home for many years has been in New Zealand, has since August been on holiday in England. We were pleased to see her at the Winter Reunion.

Congratulations to Eric Goulbourne, who took First Prize and the Silver Cup for his exhibit at the annual exhibition of the Alcester Young Farmers' Club in December.

Also to Greville P. Baylis who has had the distinction of playing for Cambridge in the Inter-Varsity Soccer match in the autumn.

And congratulations to Margaret Blackford on her qualifying as a chartered masseuse by her success in the Chartered Massage and Medical Gymnastics Examination.

We were pleased to hear that P. J. Bayne had been gazetted Sub-lieutenant. Also that he had secured second-place in the boxing championships for all ranks in the Mediterranean Fleet.

Birth.

On January 29th, to Mr. and Mrs. C. S. Bartlett (née Phyllis Alexander)—a son.

Marriages.

On September 8th at Studley, George Tracey Colegate (Scholar 1928—33) to Gertrude Theresa Dunkley.

On September 28th, at Bidford-on-Avon, Leslie Wilshaw (Scholar 1925—30) to Elizabeth M. Sherwood (Scholar 1929—33).

On December 23rd, at Headless Cross, Arthur Frederick Mason (Scholar 1927—32) to Roma Margaret Such.

On December 24th, at Redditch, Donald Saunders (Scholar 1927—33) to Mabel Gorin.

With the Colours.

The following is the second list of Old Scholars serving in the Forces, of whom information has been received.

Hughes, W. T., Sapper, R.E.
Ison, D., Teleprinter, W.A.A.F.
Lloyd, T., Private, R.A.P.C.
O'Neal, J. A., Private, R.A.S.C.
Ross, G., Transport Driver, 9th, Batt., Royal Worcs. Regt.
Savage, E. W., Private, R.A.M.C.
Scriven, S. C., Sergeant, 311th, Batt., H.A.A.
Sherwood, E., Corporal, R.A.F.
Styler, S. C., Private, R.A.P.C.
Sumner, J. D., Pilot Officer, R.A.F. (Volunteer Reserve).
Thomas, J. G., Trooper, Staffordshire Yeomanry.
Warner, P. W., Sapper, R.E.
Wheeler, P. E., Signaller, Royal Corps of Signals.

Bells.

Of late there has been much publicity given to a certain poem by Edgar Allan Poe. The subject of it is of interest to nearly everybody today, when bells are used for so many things from ringing a happy pair out of Church to giving the signal for "All Clear" after a gas attack; the sound of the "bells, bells, bells" is getting familiar to quite a lot of people.

But it is at school that the bell intrudes most upon life. As with medieval monks, our lives are dictated by the sound of metal upon metal. It is the signal to stop talking, and the signal to start talking again. It is the signal to eat and drink, and the signal to work. Generally it is the signal to work. All brief interludes of rest are cut short by it, and whatever one is doing, however much one is enjoying a practice game of hockey or a bit of gossip, the bell puts an end to it all.

But it also puts an end to the need for awkward explanations concerning homework not done, and quite often comes as manna from above to those whose memories play them false at a critical moment. How often has one blessed the sweet sound of the bell, when sore distressed by the Coefficient of Linear Expansion or tied up in the meshes of Caesar or Virgil! At such moments all tyranny and unkind oppression are forgotten, and the sound of the bell becomes the sweetest music on earth.

Last September, His Majesty's Government expressed a desire for the chief adornment of A.G.S. Bell-table—and the sound of the bell suddenly ceased to interrupt that subtle form of torture known as Education, and ceased to impose silence upon tongues by nature meant to wag more frequently than others.

"Ha!" we thought, "No Bell! Release at last!" Little did we know how swift disillusionment was to be. At first a whistle took the place of the bell, but alas! we had only just become accustomed to the sudden shrieking blast which periodically signified a change of periods, when the arm of the Law once more reft our means of signalling from us. Apparently people in the neighbourhood concluded that the Heinkels were already bearing down upon Alcester, when they heard our whistle go for "Line-up." At any rate, there we were, bell-less and whistle-less. Where could we turn now? how fill the bell's place, only too painfully and obviously vacant? Several ways out of the dilemma were tried, all only with partial success. A suggestion that we should use the Scouts' drum was abandoned as it was felt that Alcester might assume that a tribe of African savages was about to attack the town, if they heard that. Gongs were tried, as well as knocks on each class-room door (a very lengthy business) and other methods of a personal nature. Perhaps the worst of these was the method which might be described as that of "judicial enquiry." It generally worked out in practice thus:

"Please sir, I think it's time for the bell."

"Oh, is it? Anybody got the School time?"

No answer.

"No one here with a watch?"

"Yes sir, but I think mine's two minutes fast . . . or it might be three minutes slow. . . . But I put it right by the wireless this morning, only I know it gains about three minutes every two hours—or does it lose two minutes every three hours? I always forget which . . ."

An irate member of the Staff opens the door.

"When are these people coming to my Class? It was time for the bell about ten minutes ago."

This went on until no one could stand it any longer.

When the new buildings were erected, a brand new electric bell was installed over the bell table. This was rung once or twice in its brief history, and well and truly did it sound. It could easily be heard all over the School, new buildings included. The only trouble about it was that after a week or so, it refused to ring at all; so much, we thought, for modern innovations. But at first, this sophisticated, streamlined, modern arrangement, consisting (to the naked eye at any rate) of one dark-brown bakelite switch, seemed to eclipse the old bell somewhat. The old hand-bell looked antiquated, old-fashioned, and almost (horror of horrors!) Victorian. We felt tempted to despise it.

But when at last it was restored to us at the beginning of this term, we were ready to show our appreciation of the old bell. Now we know its true value, and we tend it carefully. The clapper has fallen out, and been tied back in again ; at dinner-time there is a little crowd of boys, eagerly waiting for a chance to ring it. Yes, the bell has come into its own once more. May it never again be snatched from its rightful place.

P. R. H.

Question of a Faithful Friend.

I can't quite realize how you could go,
Leaving behind a friend who loves you so,
Without a warning—was it kindly meant ?
I did not lick your hand before you went,
Nor did you pat my head, nor say " Good-night ; "
But, Master, I won't complain—you're always right.
France is such a long, long way away,
But you'll come back to me some sunny day.
Though had you said that I must stay behind
With friendly neighbours, meaning to be kind,
I should not have felt quite so sad—and yet——
I must be your ' good dog,' I must not fret ;
But try to remember all the things you've taught.
I will be brave, but, oh, a horrid thought
That always comes—" Wherever you may be
Are you sure you're happy, Master, without me ? "

C. A. STANLEY (Upper V.)

Devon Diary.

As I write Spring is hurrying hot-foot up the Coombe. A warm southwind, the crocus catching the sunbeams in its golden chalice and reflecting them across gleaming grass blades, bird-song in snatches, garrulous starlings in groups on every cottage roof, the storm-cock standing on tip-toes on the highest twig to shout his oft-repeated message to the thrilling world, the steaming thatch and freshly dug furrow, the shimmer of life across the wooded hills, stray seagulls floating white against the blue sky and in the far distance the lazy murmur of distant waves splashing on wet sands—here again are the " Songs of Spring."

A strange folk are the Devonians—lovable, generous individuals, warmhearted as the sunshine on their red soil, yet stubborn

and rigid as the rock beneath. In a crowd they are often churlish and unimaginative and may seem irritatingly slow and unreasonable to the sharper critical consciousness of the business-minded Midlander. Yet they are not "simple" but deep and devious and ploddingly persistent. "You'm a stranger in these parts?" With this they sum you up as an alien, and are henceforth superficially charming and proportionately distant to you. To know them you must live among them, mellow with them, find your way to their hearts as patiently as the brown torrent channels its winding way to the sea.

The white-collared starchiness of Sunday is no clue to the understanding of the Devon labourer. But after service from under the stiff black hats of Baptists and Congregationalists, Plymouth Brethren and Coalporters and all the other numerous religious sects come scraps of gossip exchanged at street corners which lend life and colour to the drab conventionality of the respectable Sunday citizen. Even the Minister, his superhuman duty done, becomes human. Rain always being referred to as "dirty" and being a thing of every day occurrence in Devon the customary greeting is "It be a durty day vor zur!"

I think it important to remember when you meet the Plymouth Brethren that here you are in very deed face to face with the Puritan of the Mayflower; stern men with the courage of their own conviction and a scriptural quotation to counter every attempt to see the Nazarene as He lived, as His own personal vision drew the multitude from their organised religion to Himself and His way of life. Their way of salvation is to accept literally every word of the Scriptures. Pausing on a hill-top to marvel at the beauty of sunset clouds across the sea, I got into conversation with the local "Praicher" at Windwhistle Cross, and I remember a heated argument over the Resurrection, she picturing bodies caught up in the clouds and I trying vainly to find words for the mystic glory of the spiritual body described by the writer of the Epistle to the Romans.

Slow they may seem in Devon to you of the "Progressive" Midlands, "girt dumbledores" and lacking in sense of humour even, but maybe you are wrong. Listen to this from the local village police court.

A dog, "ivverlasting barkin' at nought," died in the village, and the owner, suspecting poison, summoned a neighbour. The following dialogue took place in the police court between a cross-examining solicitor and a subpoenaed witness.

"What did the dog die of?"

"A died of a Vriday, zur."

"Yes, but how did he die?"

"On 'a 'as back, zur."

"Yes, yes, but how did he come by his death?"

"A didden come to it, zur, it come to he."

"Yes, yes, yes, my good man, but what was the complaint?"

"There wadden never no complaint, zur, the neighbours was all satisfied."

Under the cottage thatch the family of the labourer crowd into two tiny rooms, a living room and up a rickety staircase to the bedroom. Children sprawl over Granfer's old rag rug by the door, a grey cat sits washing its face with its paw contentedly by the fire. On the table is a loaf and a chipped milk jug half-full of milk, an old saucer pushed cautiously aside by the green-eyed cat, who has just recently sampled the contents of the jug in spite of the saucer put to keep her head out. Mother just arrived from the market calls the children to midday meal, "Maister" is not yet home from the plough. "Do 'ee chilun stop yur ivverlastin' chim-chammering" she says somewhat impatiently to the noisy crowd. "If you sing at the table, my boy, you'll die in the Grubber" (Workhouse) is an oft-heard saying of these parts, for the Grubber is the village bogey. Said by stern mother to flighty young daughter of sixteen in my hearing, "Wa' would 'e want with a' this dancing and flancing. I don't know whate'er be coming to the maids noodays. Nomye!"—the latter is added for emphasis in Devon.

Devon "morality" is a subject of endless fascination. Curiosity, that oldest of mortal instincts and spiritual blindness of the kind which sees the beam in thy neighbour's eye and perceives not the mote in thine own eye—these I think are the corner stones of the whole amazing fabrication. Their judgments of others in moral questions are as malicious and cruel and false as their human kindness is impulsive. Their church-going seems to emphasize the narrowness of their stunted spiritual outlook which expresses itself in scandalous gossip.

But, for all this, Devon pours its friendliness upon you. Friends, four-footed, winged, rooted, human, settle around you and they are friends for ever. Only come to Devon with a love of nature and of "God's silly sheep," an unprejudiced outlook and a good-will, and the countryside will open its heart to you.

AN ONLOOKER.

Cries in the Night.

Though many have laughed at the old ladies in Cranford who rolled a ball under the bed before getting into it, in order to make sure there was nobody lurking there, there are few who have slept alone without having some fear or apprehension. Whether the noises are more noticeable in the stillness of the night or whether they are made more acute by one's imagination is difficult to say.

Anger and exasperation are often mingled with the fear that a mysterious noise arouses. I go to bed feeling determined to be nonchalant, yet before I have settled more than half-an-hour there is sure to be an unaccountable bumping down below. It is not that the noise has made me afraid, but I am angry that it should have made me jump and upset my mental poise. However, I settle down again in the hope that it was nothing serious—perhaps the dog knocking against the door.

Suddenly the dismal ominous cry of the screech owl pierces the stillness of the night air. Although I never believe in the superstition that these birds bring death to the house, I feel a sudden wild loneliness as though the world, under the cover of darkness, had changed from the friendly familiar thing that it was, into a strange sinister atmosphere that my humble brain cannot cope with.

The stairs creak horribly, as though some stealthy criminal were taking advantage of the darkness and my loneliness. "It's only the wood contracting in the cold air," I reassure myself—not very thoroughly. By this time I am probably more wide awake than when I first came to bed. I switch on the light to discover the time, and decide that a sip of water may help the situation. "Put that light out," comes a cry from the street, and I realise that I have drawn back the blind, before getting into bed. I hurriedly drop my glass and feel for the switch, and once more the room is cloaked in darkness. Heavens! only twelve o'clock: six more hours before healthy daylight fills the room.

I start counting sheep, one—two—three—but for the life of me cannot visualise even one woolly form, much less rise to such heights of imagination as to see them coming through a gap. Never mind, I keep on counting. Five hundred-and-two, five hundred-and-three. What is that low metallic mumbling! Not a squadron of enemy bombers surely. There was a time when I thought that an air-raid would be rather fun—but not to-night. I raise my head, listening intently. The sound comes

nearer—it develops into a loud roaring commotion ; then I realise that it is a heavy petrol lorry, clanking its way through the night.

The melancholy howl of a dog echoes through the streets, and another answers. A cock crows in the distance. A bird rustles in the ivy outside the windows and having made its position more comfortable, settles down again. So will I. As I at length begin to dose, through my tired brain there runs the prayer :—

“ From ghoulies and ghosties,
And four-footed beasties
And things that go bump in the night—
Good Lord deliver us.”

DOROTHY SAVAGE. (Upper V.)

Notes and News.

The Spring term opened on Monday, January 8th, and closes on Friday, April 5th.

Two new prefects have been appointed—G. Miles and C. Sanders.

At the end of last term the sum of £1 10s. 11d. was collected for the Midland Societies of the Blind.

Carol concerts were held on Wednesday, December 20th.

A lecture was given in support of Dr. Barnardo's Homes on Friday, February 9th, and was attended by forms Upper Four, Lower Four, Shell and Three.

We are sorry that Miss Deans has again been compelled by ill-health to be away from school for the whole of the term.

Our best wishes accompany Mr. E. R. Cook, who left us in the middle of the term to take up a new appointment at Bristol. He had joined the Staff in September 1929.

We welcome to the Staff Mr. L. T. Jackson, who joined us at the beginning of term, and Mr. J. M. Cameron, who came at half term.

The school was closed for the greater part of the week beginning January 29th, on account of the heavy snowfall and the consequent difficulties of transport. The half term holiday, previously fixed for Monday, February 19th, was cancelled.

During the spell of cold weather, girls of the Upper Fourth and upwards were given the opportunity of skating close to the school.

The Remove are collecting silver paper.

In response to the appeal for National Savings, two groups, organised by Miss Kanaar and Mr. Jackson, have been started in school. Some news of them will be found on another page.

With the introduction of "Summer time," the school returned on Monday, February 26th, to its normal working hours, which had been somewhat shortened during the winter.

Speech Day originally fixed for March 14th, has had to be postponed till Thursday, May 2nd. The address will be given by Sir Norman Angell.

Practices in the speedy evacuation of the buildings and the occupation of the trenches have been held during the term.

On Monday, December 18th, there was an open afternoon for the Preparatory Department, when parents were given the opportunity of seeing some of the work done, and of meeting the members of the Staff concerned with that work. There was a gymnastic display, together with songs and recitations. The visitors were afterwards entertained to tea. On the following day, the Preparatory Department had a tea party with Xmas crackers in the dining room.

Miss Kanaar is leaving us at the end of the term, having been appointed to Ashford School for Girls, Kent.

The Blackbird.

Now on sunny days we hear
Blackbird's whistle, sweet and clear,
How he makes our pulses thrill
With that wondrous yellow bill.

Often can we hear him now,
Singing from the leafless bough ;
Or, if startled, how he cries,
As away he quickly flies.

Can we if we love his song,
Grudge him fruit when days are long ?
Surely we a bit can spare—
Well he pays us for his share.

E. A. ASPINWALL (Upper V.)

An Interesting Sequel.

At the top of the garden at home I have some fowls and also some ducks. The eggs from these I sell, and find it very profitable as my father pays for all the food. Towards the end of last summer I was getting quite a lot of eggs, especially from the ducks, as these lay their eggs more consistently than the fowls. It suddenly happened that the duck eggs got fewer and my father could not understand this. Some days each of the three ducks would lay, on other days only two, and sometimes we only got one egg. I myself feed the fowls and the ducks in the evening, and one day I found in the duck-run, an egg shell with the top neatly taken off and the inside completely empty. When my father came home I took him to see this, and he immediately said, "We have rats taking the eggs; now I understand why we get one egg and sometimes three. We shall have to catch the thief."

The same night we set a wire cage trap with the head of a fish as a temptation. The following morning my father went to feed the poultry and I heard him shout to me that we had caught the thief. I went up to the duck-pen (rather timidly, as I do not like rats); but imagine my surprise when holding my father's hand very firmly, I looked in the trap and saw not a rat, but a ball of spikes, which was a hedgehog, apparently asleep. Now I did not know, and even my father did not know, that hedgehogs liked eggs, and how did it take the top off to enable it to suck the egg? We were even more interested to know that this animal could be tempted by fish. We wonder what it would really like best for breakfast.

DOROTHY JONES. (Form III.)

Letter Writing.

Letter writing is an art in which I am not very skilful. How often have I sat down hopefully, with the intention of writing an interesting epistle and have been obliged to stop short after the first two or three sentences because inspiration has ceased to flow. No amount of pen-chewing can then make me think of anything to put down, while the almost blank page stares up at me most uncompromisingly. I have to put down my pen with a sigh and inwardly envy those who have the gift of writing letters fluently.

One of my most pleasant dreams concerns the day when I shall be able to write a letter of ten or twelve pages without having to stop once or ask for help. I may say that my assistants, also, will be very much relieved. They seem to find it annoying when, coming to the end of my own resources, I appeal to them for aid, and sometimes interrupt a conversation or a game. They frequently turn a deaf ear to my entreaties and go on enjoying themselves without taking further notice of me.

Thus, receiving letters from other people is to me a pleasure tainted with apprehension. I enjoy reading them very much, but I am acutely conscious all the time that I shall have to frame some sort of reply. I postpone the evil moment as long as I possibly can and then, with a sinking heart and many inward forebodings, I apply myself to the task. Indeed, the only part of it which I can accomplish with ease is the addressing of the envelope. This, at least, presents no difficulty even to the least fluent of writers.

Now, why has not some enterprising person compiled a book of letters to fit every occasion and emergency? Such a volume would achieve instant popularity with those who, like myself, find letter-writing a bore. The author would not only reap a large fortune; he would have the pleasure of knowing that he had lightened a heavy burden for many people. The gratitude of a nation would lie at his feet; his name would go down in history. But till this book is written, I must toil on without any great enjoyment or success in the arduous task of letter-writing.

MARY AUSTIN (Upper V.)

Sonnet.

Behold he stands—the idol of the race,
The inspiration of a million dreams.
O who can sing his dignity, his grace?
He is a star, lighting with his bright beams
A dreary, languid, aimless, starving land
Where fear grows daily, hopes—and food—decrease.
He is the distant goal of those who stand
In long queues, with one ration book apiece.
He and his mates are rare; like precious stones;
For him each nation strives, each hopes to gain
This longed-for prize, which if one nation owns
Will conquer all. It tries with might and main
To get him, rear him, and—when he grows big—
Eat him—its Dream, its King—its Aryan Pig!

D. J. H.

Guide to Economics.

This little glossary of economic terms is written especially for the benefit of the present Upper Fifth. I feel sure that if they read it carefully they cannot help passing The Oxford next July.

Economics. This deals primarily with man as wanting (a lot) working (a little) getting (not much) and spending (at the local).

Direct Effort. This means growing your own food, making your own furniture, cutting your own hair, etc. It is not a very advisable expedient.

Indirect Effort. As practised by burglars, blackmailers, etc. The object of all this effort is ultimate satisfaction, and unless you end up on the wrong side of a prison wall, the latter course offers less resistance, as well as giving greater satisfaction.

The Industrial Group. A distinctly biased political organisation consisting entirely of wealthy old manufacturers with more money than sense.

Distribution. The work of the G.P.O.

Gifts of Nature. Once defined by St. John Rue-it Squill (or was it someone else?) as half-an-acre and a cow.

Capital. You should always start a sentence with one.

Capitalist. A butt for the soap box orators in Hyde Park.

Division of Labour. No one can do everything for himself. Some people cannot do anything, but never mind that now. The result is the somewhat complex modern world in which every new-born baby finds himself, and everyone in his time learns to know himself, find himself and serve the community. Each then follows some trade or profession, and among the most prominent of these is the class known as professional or black-hearted workers. These men are employed in such establishments as the Mystery of Information, and are responsible for black-outs, pool petrol and rationing.

Demand. A curt way of asking for something, particularly money. Usually takes the form of a letter beginning Dear Sir, Unless

Money. What we are all short of. The Economist, however, regards money as the medium of exchange, the measure of values, the curse of the world, etc.

Free Coinage. This is not what it sounds like.

Brassage. The quantity of *ersatz* materials in coinage.

Debasement. An underground room in a negro quarter.

Fiduciary Issue. You are required by the police to say this three times if your sobriety is suspect.

Inflation. See under balloon barrage.

Bank of England Reserve. A volunteer corps consisting entirely of black-hearted workers who are called up once a year (for the annual dinner).

Legal Tender. Any money except the home-made variety.

Credit. What all you Upper Fifth people ought to get in Economics next July.

Bill of Exchange. An entirely confusing way of paying someone in Hamburg for some goods you bought of another man in New York. The system is as follows : You pay a man whom you owe nothing for something you didn't buy off someone else, who has been paid by another man in Singapore, who has sold something to one of the other chaps. The Bill of exchange is sent to various clearing houses, counting houses, etc., and eventually every one except the black-hearted workers in these establishments finds himself out of pocket. All this is part of the economic system and therefore good and right.

Cheque. A man from Muddel Europe.

Rent. A tear or hole, especially in clothing.

Ricardo's Theory of Rent. This escapes one at present, but I believe it proves something about diminishing refunds.

BOOKS TO READ.

The Stealth of Nations, by Adam Bede.

Economic Hooch, by St. John Rue-it Squill.

And so, I find that I have come to the end of my remarks. I will say in conclusion, however, that if you fail in that examination next July you deserve all that is coming to you, and more.

YOUR LOVING UNCLE X.

The Postman.

(A NONSENSICAL POEM).

I see him coming up the lane,
I stand, and watch, and wait,
I hope he won't go down again,
And not come through our gate.

I see him at the house next door,
While playing with the pup,
He stands and talks, and more and more
I hope he'll hurry up.

And now he comes along the walk,
And gets out to his van,
I trust he will not start to talk
To any other man.

But, no ! he looks towards our door,
And carries in his hand
The letter I've been waiting for
From that far foreign land.

E. M. EVANS (Upper V).

Olla Podrida.

The world gets smaller every day—a middle school boy informs us that he had a pleasant journey from London to York via the Pyrenees.

Our Sixth-form philosopher's latest discovery—that "man is relatively soft."

More discoveries of Science: the difference between a liquid and a fluid, R.M.S. tells us, is that "a liquid is more elastic, because if you hit it, it bounces back."

E.A. gives us a vivid description of a Medieval monster, "his small nose glowing with two eyes."

"What is matter but energy?" demands M.W.B.

Will R.G.W. supply us with the menu of a "full coarse meal."

A familiar spirit, according to N.J.N., is a sort of drink.

Quiétude.

I know a little house somewhere,
Untouched by talk of war,
Where calm and peacefulness prevail
In spite of "Lord Haw-Haw."

There is no sign of Radio
Which brings disquieting news,
When we are forced to listen to
"The other fellow's" views.

No daily paper ever comes
To this sweet old-world cot,
With talk and idle chatter of
Herr Hitler's latest plot.

It nestles 'neath a shelt'ring hill,
Which looks on it with pride.
For it's been there since that fair day
When Anne was Albert's bride.

They're older now, These simple folk,
But they're still just the same,
For they have not been modernised,
Yet do not find life tame.

MARY TROTMAN (Lower V.)

A Waitress.

"Nippy" is just one of the girls who work in one of Lyons' Corner Houses. She is pleasant, humorous and a model waitress. Her eyes always flash, her teeth always sparkle, her chestnut hair is always neat and glossy beneath her starched and creaseless cap. Her trim and simple collar vies with her cap for cleanliness. Stiff white cuffs protect her sleeves, while her dark dress is designed both for comfort and service. Two rows of tiny white buttons relieve the severity of the plain bodice, and produce a simple yet attractive appearance. The brightest of articles seem dingy in comparison with her immaculate apron, and her neat and serviceable footwear harmonizes with the rest of her apparel in its sensible utility. From her waist hangs a little notebook to which a pencil is attached, both articles being in constant use. Her quick, white fingers show no signs of a busy life and we admire the dexterity and speediness with which they handle plates and pencil alike. She always manages to have the cleanest of cloths over her arm and is never without a most enticing remedy for 'that hungry feeling' at the tip of her supple tongue. Altogether she presents a perfect example of crisp, smart service combined with a happy nature and an outstanding air of freshness.

OLWEN DAVIES, (Upper Four.)

The First Blackout.

The first black-out practice was not the ordinary thing that black-outs have now lapsed into. Nothing extraordinary really happened, but the novelty of the thing aroused our excitement. It was, I think, about August the seventeenth at the time when I was staying with a friend out in the country. It still stands out very clearly in my mind and I remember every detail perfectly.

As the black-out was not due to start until midnight, we did not have to bother with dark curtains and we went to bed expecting great events. We had decided to stay awake to see if anything happened. We were expecting searchlights and all the other things one connects with black-outs, and hoped there would at least be an air battle, whether real or otherwise. Our decision was not carried out and we both fell asleep.

However, about four hours afterwards, we both sat up in bed at exactly the same moment. Everything was still and we could hear nothing at all. We were both only half awake and I was wondering whether I really was awake and asked in rather a

dazed fashion whether the moon was shining in my face. When informed that it was, I decided that I must be awake after all and on further investigation I discovered that the moon was practically full and that there were hundreds of stars assisting in making it almost as light as day.

Suddenly we heard the drone of an aeroplane. We were immediately wide awake and jumped out of bed with great alacrity, feeling quite excited. We searched among the stars for about five minutes before we managed to find one moving and decided that it was an aeroplane. Our excitement abated somewhat when we knew there was only one, but we still waited expectantly for something to happen. At last we got back into bed in despair. As far as we were concerned the black-out had been a failure. When we were back in bed the moon continued to look through the window, mocking our folly.

The next morning we were awakened by the sound of a loud conversation between the next door neighbour and a man who was picking fruit. After the neighbour had sent the bucket clanging down into the well, we discovered that they were talking about the black-out. One asked if our neighbour had heard any 'eeryplanes'; to which she replied, "Ah, I 'eard one or two, you know." Thinking that someone had seen much more than we had we poked our heads out of the window to discover what we had missed. Unfortunately, after being greeted with 'How are you getting on? All right?' we were unable to get any further information than that he (the man picking fruit) always slept too soundly to hear anything of aeroplanes.

We got up feeling that it was very unsuccessful, but I decided that I could make a magazine article out of it. With that end in view I thought out this article while washing-up sometime in the middle of last August.

J. M. H. (Upper V.)

Spring.

The world is very old
And dull with wear
Yet groweth new again
As flowers appear.

The world is very old
But every Spring
Push forth the daisies small
While birds do sing.

The world is very old
And seemeth sad
But Spring returns each year
And it is glad.

M. D. WELLS (Upper V.)

The Great Thaw.

At the beginning of this term we experienced a great snowfall—the greatest snowfall in living memory, we are told. Some people are inclined to disagree with this statement and say that in eighteen-something they remember when the snow was level with the hedges at the side of the road. They do not state the height of the hedges, but it is not our job to argue with our elders on facts we know nothing about. Let us say that it was the greatest snowfall in some people's memories. But we can say that the snowfall was followed by a thaw which cleared the country of the snow in a very short while. The melting of the snow resulted in the filling of the rivers to overflowing. The terrific force of the water broke the ice, which had given amusement to so many people for a fortnight previously into large lumps such as one reads about in adventure stories under the name of pack ice. This unusual occurrence afforded good pictures for the local newspaper which proudly published a photograph bearing the title: "Arctic weather conditions at Alcester." The mass of ice held up the water and men had to be employed by the County Council to break it up.

Opinion was divided as to whether the thaw was an occasion for rejoicing or not. The former skaters and others who had enjoyed winter sport in one form or another, said decidedly that it was—well, not exactly to their liking, and stood looking at the troubled waters with faces as long as a wet week, which that week certainly was! The flood rose and rose, it flooded roads, and cut people off from their homes. Traffic had to be diverted causing more petrol to be used, an indirect blow at the country's resources. The little post-vans which one may see flitting about the streets of Alcester were unable to brave the mass of water and postage deliveries and collections were curtailed. Everyone was equipped with Wellingtons or other suitable equipment for water fighting.

Leaks in water pipes now showed themselves and some sprayed their unfortunate owners in bed. Plumbers had the busiest time on record. But the ice did not go as quickly as was expected and in underground pipes ice lingered for as long as a month.

But now it has gone. The sudden change has caused epidemics of influenza and colds but on the whole I think no one will disagree that it was all for the better.

J. M. STEWART (Lower V.).

The Intruder.

I woke up with a start, and great beads of sweat rolled down my forehead. I sat up in bed and peered fearfully round the room. With a jerk my eyes riveted on the door knob; it was turning, slowly, slowly.

There was a faint creak, the door swung open, a vague face looked in.

Hardly daring to breathe, with bulging eyes I watched him creep to my bed. As he lifted his arm to strike, the moon's rays shone on the gleaming thing he held in his hand. Then with a gush all my pent-up fear came out, and with a yell I ran to the door. But a hand reached out and pulled me back, a voice said "What's the matter, Jimmy? Have you been dreaming?" With a gasp of relief, I came to my senses and found my father with the medicine bottle in his hand.

INGRAM (Lower IV).

A Little Nonsense.

T'was six o'clock in Winter time,
A bitter wind was blowing,
The dusk was quickly closing in,
No star or moon was showing.

When walking down the lane one night,
(My nose felt like an icicle,)
All at once there came in sight,
A woman on a bicycle.

She passed me once—she passed me twice,
She passed me yet again,
In fact she passed me many times,
As I walked down the lane.

She did not speak or look at me,
The fact she couldn't hide,
(And I could tell immediately)
She was but learning to ride.

Her eyes, they had a glassy stare,
Her movements were uncertain,
When into a rut her wheel did go.
—On that we'll draw the curtain.

J. BRIDGMAN (Lower V).

On Having A Week's Holiday.

How fortunate we were to have a week's holiday towards the middle of term! On the Monday morning after waiting in vain for the 'bus, we trudged happily back home entertaining thoughts of vivid snow fights, rough and tumble games on the ice and other delights of Winter. For the first two days or so we had a glorious time, but our ardour soon cooled (in my case, quite quickly, for I found the ice much too hard for my liking) and we resorted to the somewhat less energetic pastimes of the home. We soon came to the conclusion that home work is much more easily done when we are at school and so we soon forgot about that. Of course the wireless provided a certain amount of enjoyment, but after a time this became quite monotonous; and gazing vacantly into the fire for hour upon hour proved extremely boring too. The holidays slowly wore on. After a time I became quite sick of them.

One afternoon, by way of a change I decided to go to the pictures. I do not remember much of the picture, but I do well remember waiting for the 'bus in the cold damp air; and finally after waiting about an hour-and-a-half I was unable to get on it owing to the large crowd of people, who nearly began a free fight in their mad onrush. Consequently I had to walk home, not at all a pleasant occupation with the deep snow underfoot in addition to the black-out.

On the following Monday, I was only too glad to return to school and make up for lost time.

F. HOUGHTON (Lower V.)

A Sailor's Yarns.

I have an uncle who is a Petty Officer in the Navy. When last on leave, he came to spend a few days with us, much to our delight. We remembered his previous visit, and all his yarns.

This time he seemed to have had more escapades than ever. We were all gathered round the fire one evening when he said, "Let me see, I don't think I told you of my last visit to the Mermaids." We shook our heads, and he continued. "Well, I had the shock of my life. They had A.R.P. down there, only they called it W.R.P.—Water Raid Precautions. There was a feeling of general discontent and it all seemed to be directed against the Nazis and Hitler. They didn't like the German U.boats, because of the bad water they left behind them, and

found they couldn't have much pleasure themselves in swimming about for fear of bumping into mines. Then I was ready to return, but all the mermaids clustered round me and asked to marry King Neptune's daughter, Coral. This rather embarrassed me ; so I hastily explained I was already married and quickly returned to my ship."

In a letter I received sometime ago, my uncle had asked me if I would like a pet seal or penguin. I wrote back to say I would much prefer a penguin and asked him to call it "Archibald." Whilst he was here, I thought I would ask him about Archibald. He replied "Oh, I'm sorry about him. I'm afraid I couldn't bring him, as he is helping to fight for the Finns against Russia."

So now I await letters on the progress Archibald is making.

B. M. MOIZER (Upper IV).

A Memorable Incident.

In August 1911, I went to a small village near Penzance, Cornwall, to spend a quiet week-end. But this little excursion turned out to be otherwise. However, I will begin at the beginning.

On Friday night I started for a little village called S——g. Here I meant to spend a quiet weekend, as the town had lately been very busy. Arriving at the inn, I retired very early and spent a peaceful night. I woke early and being immensely refreshed I decided on a stroll along the beach before breakfast.

I noticed at once a strange stillness and as I rounded a rock, all civilisation seemed to have passed away. The gulls themselves seemed unusually quiet. The sea was very calm, and an occasional cry from the gulls with the gentle lapping of the waves, were the only sounds to be heard. When I arrived back at the Inn and sat down to breakfast, I noticed the same strange, tense atmosphere, like the calm before the storm.

Then at ten o'clock, I noticed a commotion on the beach, and went down to explore. There, not fifty yards out to sea, was a school of whales. Their bulk was immense and they were about thirty in number. But the sea seemed full of them, as they

playfully plunged and floundered about till they were within twenty yards of the shore. It was the high-tide and they were watched with great interest from the shore. Then the tide began to recede. About ten of them escaped, while the rest were left high and dry. Almost at once some five of them were attacked with any kind of weapon. Another young calf was attached to a horse and dragged to the sea. The rest were kept alive by people mercifully splashing them with water.

On Sunday afternoon I had to leave, and then the tide had again begun to recede, and, as I learned later, the remaining whales were left high and dry. These either died or were killed.

(This story is based on a true report published in the "Cornishman" in 1911).

PORTMAN ii (Lower IV.)

A Dog Tells Its Story.

My name is Peter. One day I saw another dog coming along so I very soon ran away to my mistress. She said that she was going shopping. She let me carry her bag, and I was very proud to do so. The first shop we came to was the butcher's. When we were inside I saw some sausages on the counter. I took one leap, and ran off with them, with the butcher after me. I dodged him and shared the sausages with my pal "Sandy." When I arrived home after my feast, my mistress scolded me very much, and so I was chained up.

The next day I was sitting at the gate when the baker came along with his van. He left the door open, and I jumped inside and had a nice feast before he came back. He must have had a shock when he found his cakes had gone.

Another time I was in a field when I noticed a bull. I ran away and the bull came after me. When I had run round the field twice, I felt very tired, so I took a chance and dived into the hedge, escaping by a hair's breadth. I picked myself up scratched all over. I very quickly ran off home and had the scratches seen to.

HANCOX (iii).

Examination Results.

ASSOCIATED BOARD OF THE ROYAL SCHOOLS OF MUSIC.

In the examinations held last December, all candidates from the school obtained certificates.

Piano : Grade V. (Higher), †R. H. Arnold, *V. J. Hansell.
Grade IV (Lower), J. H. Bridgman, C. E. Sanders.
Grade II (Elementary), D. A. Villers, K. M. Wilson.

Violin : Grade IV (Lower), *D. A. Savage.
Grade III (Transitional), C. H. Bryan.

† With distinction.

* With credit.

OXFORD SCHOOL CERTIFICATE.

The following candidate was successful in the December examination.

K. A. Woods (2 Credits).

National Savings.

This term two Savings Groups have been formed in response to the national appeal. The girls' Group has forty-five members and the boys' thirty-one. While this must be considered a good beginning, it is felt that the numbers ought to be increased in both Groups. An official of the National Association is shortly to visit the school to talk of the uses to which the loan is put and to show the benefits to be received both directly and indirectly from membership.

Stamps to the value of £7 19s. 6d. have already been purchased in the Girls' Group. One certificate has been bought outright. Five date-stamps, each given on the purchase of fifteen shillings-worth of savings stamps, have been bought. These will be given to the first five pupils who purchase Certificates. They will benefit by receiving interest from the date of issue of the date-stamp.

In the Boys' Group stamps have been bought to the value of £4 5s. and one Certificate has been purchased. Date-stamps will also be available in this Group.

Full particulars of the savings scheme may be had at the school.

Scouts.

SCOUTMASTER—Mr. Walker.

Owing to the bad weather, this term very little outside work has been able to be done. Much use has been made of this opportunity for indoor signalling and ambulance practices. During the snowy weather a snowfight was organised and was enjoyed by everybody. Five more boys have joined the Scouts and these have helped to replace the many who left after last Summer term. We shall be glad to welcome any other new boys, especially from the Third Form, who would care to join the Scouts.

The collection of waste paper has been progressing well, two more loads having been taken away. All the Scouts have helped in this work, but a few of the Fifth form boys, who go collecting in Alcester every Saturday, must be specially thanked. It is hoped that all the School will help in this work by saving all their waste paper which can then be collected.

S. K. W.

Debating Society.

CHAIRMAN—Miss Evans.

HON. SECRETARY—Butt.

COMMITTEE—

P. Horseman, M. Winwood, Arnold i, Collins ii, Spencer and Butt.

It was found that, owing to such difficulties as the "black-out" and the shortness of the Term, only one debate could be held before Christmas.

The subject—"This House is convinced that an era of perpetual peace would prove disastrous to humanity"—was well thrashed out by the meeting, the Motion being carried by a majority of nine.

It has been suggested that this term a debate should be held on "Convention," and as this promises a good debate, it is hoped that members will make a point of attending.

M. B. W.

Football.

CAPTAIN—Collins i.

Owing to adverse weather conditions during the first half of this term, five of our fixtures unfortunately had to be cancelled, but on March 2nd, the weather was kind and we were visited by Evesham P.H.G.S.

Play started with a quick goal for Evesham, but Alcester equalised immediately, taking the lead a few minutes later. During the latter part of the first half, Alcester were on the attack and half-time came with the score at 4—1, in Alcester's favour. The second half was less exciting, however, and play slowed down considerably, but towards the end Alcester increased their pressure and three more goals resulted. When the final whistle blew, we came off the field easy victors by seven goals to one.

RESULTS :

A.G.S. v. Evesham P.H.G.S. (home), won, 7—1.

v. Bromsgrove C.H.S., (away), lost, 1—4.

v. Old Scholars (home), drawn, 4—4.

Sides match : Jackals 2, Tomtits 2.

Hockey.

CAPTAIN—D. Horseman.

Owing to the weather and the consequent condition of the field, very little hockey has been played. It is hoped, however, that the remaining matches will be able to be played, and played successfully. The team needs some hard practice, and a new goalkeeper has to be found to take the place of J. Holder, who is greatly missed on the hockey field.

Only one sides match has been played, the result being a victory of 2—1 for the Brownies over the Jackals.

RESULT :

A.G.S. v. Solihull G.S. 2nd XI, (home), won 6—1.

v. Old Scholars (home), lost, 1—2.

D.J.H.

For the Juniors.**The Broken Wing.**

Dear little thing, Oh dear little thing,
Have you really broken your wing,
If you have I'll take you home,
And try and mend the broken bone.

Dear little thing, Oh dear little thing,
I think I've mended your broken wing,
If I have I'll let you know,
For I'm sure you want to go.

Dear little thing, Oh dear little thing,
Yes I've mended your broken wing,
There you go up in the sky,
Catching every little fly.

Dear little thing, Oh dear little thing,
You can very joyfully sing,
Better than any words can tell,
Now I know that you are well.

MARGARET IRVING (Remove).

Our Pets.

We have a rabbit and a cat and we are going to have a puppy.
They all will be black and white, because the rabbit is black and white, and so is the cat and the puppy will be too, because we have seen him. At breakfast time Tinky my cat always jumps up and tries to get my breakfast.

DOROTHY ROSE, Age 8 (Form i).

The Signalman.

In my signal box up here stand I,
And watch trains as they go by.
The trains they puff, the trains they blow,
As they to different stations go,
In my signal box I keep some flowers,
To pass away the dreary hours.

GITTUS (Remove).



ALCESTER :
THE CHRONICLE OFFICE,
HIGH STREET.
